

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. - 3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently Amended) A paperboard carton with two ends for carrying a plurality of containers, the carton comprising:

(a) a bottom panel, top panel and adjoining side panels attached to the top panel by fold lines, with each end of the carton being closed by a top end flap attached to the top panel by a fold line, a side end flap foldably attached to each side panel, a bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing said flaps on each end of the carton in the closed position;

(b) said carton having a handle aperture in at least one top end flap for carrying the carton when loaded with containers with said flaps being secured in the closed position, with each side end flap on the same end of the carton as said top end flap having an aperture which is sufficiently aligned with the handle aperture in said top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the handle aperture in said top end flap and aligned apertures in side end flaps for carrying the loaded carton; and

(c) said carton having a paperboard insert which is secured by securing means to at least one of the (i) top end flaps and (ii) the side end flaps on each end of the carton having a handle aperture in said top end flap, said insert having an aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the handle aperture in said top end flap and apertures in said side end flaps so that a person's hand can be inserted through all aligned apertures to carry the carton when loaded with containers with both ends of the carton being secured in the closed position, said paperboard insert and said side end flaps reinforcing the top end flap with a handle aperture to preserve the

integrity of said handle aperture when the carton is loaded with containers and being carried by a handle aperture in at least one of the top end flaps;

wherein ~~The carton of claim 1 in which~~ the insert is secured by securing means to each side end flap on each end of the carton having a handle aperture in said top end flap.

5. (Currently Amended) A paperboard carton with two ends for carrying a plurality of containers, the carton comprising:

(a) a bottom panel, top panel and adjoining side panels attached to the top panel by fold lines, with each end of the carton being closed by a top end flap attached to the top panel by a fold line, a side end flap foldably attached to each side panel, a bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing said flaps on each end of the carton in the closed position;

(b) said carton having a handle aperture in at least one top end flap for carrying the carton when loaded with containers with said flaps being secured in the closed position, with each side end flap on the same end of the carton as said top end flap having an aperture which is sufficiently aligned with the handle aperture in said top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the handle aperture in said top end flap and aligned apertures in side end flaps for carrying the loaded carton; and

(c) said carton having a paperboard insert which is secured by securing means to at least one of the (i) top end flaps and (ii) the side end flaps on each end of the carton having a handle aperture in said top end flap, said insert having an aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the handle aperture in said top end flap and apertures in said side end flaps so that a person's hand can be inserted through all aligned apertures to carry the carton when loaded with containers with both ends of the carton being secured in the closed position, said paperboard insert and said side end flaps reinforcing the top end flap with a handle aperture to preserve the integrity of said handle aperture when the carton is loaded with containers and being carried by a handle aperture in at least one of the top end flaps;

wherein ~~The carton of claim 1 in which~~ the paperboard insert is secured by securing means to each top end flap having a handle aperture in said top end flap.

6. (Currently Amended) The carton of claim 5 in which each top end flap has a handle aperture to which the ~~[[a]]~~ paperboard insert is secured by securing means.

7. (Original) The carton of claim 6 in which each top end flap has an inside and outside surface and the paperboard insert is secured to the inside surface of each top end flap.

8. (Original) The carton of claim 7 in which each insert has an aperture larger than the corresponding handle aperture in the top end flap to which the insert is secured.

9. (Original) The carton of claim 8 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel which extend into at least one side panel to form a dispenser flap which when torn open allows the removal of containers from the carton.

10. (Original) The carton of claim 9 in which the interconnected tear lines extend into each side panel and are interconnected in said top panel to form two dispenser flaps.

11. (Original) The carton of claim 10 in which a finger flap is formed by a tear line adjacent to a location in the interconnected tear lines that forms two flaps so that when the finger flap is opened the interconnected tear lines can be torn opening either or both dispenser flaps so containers can be removed from the carton.

12. (Currently Amended) The carton of claim 5 ~~[[6]]~~ in which the insert also extends across the top panel from one top end flap to the other top end flap.

13. (Original) The carton of claim 12 in which the insert has apertures larger than the corresponding handle aperture in each top end flap.

14. (Original) The carton of claim 13 in which the insert has a fold line that is adjacent to the fold line between the top panel and each top end flap with each fold line in said insert being interspersed with a plurality of apertures along the fold line to facilitate closing and securing the top end flaps on each end of the carton together.

15. (Original) The carton of claim 14 in which each top end flap and the top panel has an inside and outside surface and the insert is secured to the inside surfaces of the top panel and the top end flaps by glue.

16. (Original) The carton of claim 15 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming at least one dispenser flap for removing containers from the carton when the flap is opened with the insert having corresponding interconnected tear lines that are located adjacent the interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming an adjacent flap that can be opened with the dispenser flap in the top panel.

17. (Original) The carton of claim 14 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming two dispenser flaps for removing containers from the carton when a dispenser flap is opened with the insert having corresponding interconnected tear lines that are located adjacent to the interconnected tear lines in the top panel for forming flaps which are adjacent to the dispenser flaps in the top panel, with the adjacent flap in the insert opening when a dispenser flap in the top panel is opened.

18. (Original) The carton of claim 17 which has a finger flap formed by a tear line in the top panel adjacent the interconnected tear lines and a corresponding opening in the insert that is at least as large as the finger flap in the top panel.

19. (Original) The carton of claim 18 in which the insert has a plurality of subsidiary tear lines parallel to at least a substantial portion of the interconnected tear lines in the insert so that the combination of the interconnected tear lines and subsidiary tear lines are located in

relation to the dispenser flaps in the top panel so as not to impede the opening of a flap in the insert when the adjacent dispenser flap in the top panel is opened.

20. (Original) The carton of claim 18 in which the insert has a plurality of subsidiary tear lines located parallel to a substantial portion of the interconnected tear lines in the insert so as to permit the tearing of the flap in the insert so that it is capable of being torn open and extended inside the opening formed by tearing and opening the adjacent dispenser flap in the top panel, said subsidiary tear lines being located so as to compensate for any slight misalignment when the insert is located and secured to the top panel.

21.-35. (Canceled)

36. (New) A paperboard carton with two ends for carrying a plurality of containers, the carton comprising:

(a) a bottom panel, top panel and adjoining side panels attached to the top panel by fold lines, with each end of the carton being closed by a top end flap attached to the top panel by a fold line, a side end flap foldably attached to each side panel, a bottom end flap foldably attached to the bottom panel, with means for securing said flaps on each end of the carton in the closed position;

(b) said carton having a handle aperture in at least one top end flap for carrying the carton when loaded with containers with said flaps being secured in the closed position, with each side end flap on the same end of the carton as said top end flap having an aperture which is sufficiently aligned with the handle aperture in said top end flap so that a person's hand can be extended through the handle aperture in said top end flap and aligned apertures in side end flaps for carrying the loaded carton; and

(c) said carton having a first paperboard insert and a second paperboard insert; the first paperboard insert and the second paperboard insert secured by securing means to at least one of the (i) top end flaps and (ii) the side end flaps with the first paperboard insert secured at a first end and the second paperboard insert secured on a second end of the carton; the first and second

ends of the carton having a handle aperture in said top end flap, said first and second paperboard inserts each having an aperture that is sufficiently aligned with the handle aperture in said top end flap and apertures in said side end flaps so that a person's hand can be inserted through all aligned apertures to carry the carton when loaded with containers with both ends of the carton being secured in the closed position, said first and second paperboard inserts and said side end flaps reinforcing the top end flap with a handle aperture to preserve the integrity of said handle aperture when the carton is loaded with containers and being carried by a handle aperture in at least one of the top end flaps.

37. (New) The carton of claim 36 in which the means for securing the first and second inserts to the carton and the flaps together is glue.

38. (New) The carton of claim 36 in which the first and the second inserts are secured by securing means to each respective side end flap on the first end and the second end of the carton having a handle aperture in said top end flap.

39. (New) The carton of claim 36 in which the first paperboard insert and the second paperboard insert are secured by securing means to each respective top end flap having a handle aperture in said top end flap.

40. (New) The carton of claim 39 in which each top end flap has a handle aperture to which the first paperboard insert or the second paperboard insert is respectively secured by securing means.

41. (New) The carton of claim 40 in which each top end flap has an inside and outside surface and the first paperboard insert and the second paperboard insert is secured to the inside surface of each respective top end flap.

42. (New) The carton of claim 41 in which the first insert and the second insert each has an aperture larger than the corresponding handle aperture in the top end flap to which the first or second insert is respectively secured.

43. (New) The carton of claim 42 which has interconnected tear lines in the top panel which extend into at least one side panel to form a dispenser flap which when torn open allows the removal of containers from the carton.

44. (New) The carton of claim 43 in which the interconnected tear lines extend into each side panel and are interconnected in said top panel to form two dispenser flaps.

45. (New) The carton of claim 44 in which a finger flap is formed by a tear line adjacent to a location in the interconnected tear lines that forms two flaps so that when the finger flap is opened the interconnected tear lines can be torn opening either or both dispenser flaps so containers can be removed from the carton.

46. (New) The carton of claim 40 in which the first and second inserts extend across the top panel from one top end flap to the other top end flap.